DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 256 641 SO 016 330

TITLE Strengthening High School World Studies Courses. Conference Report. A Wingspread Conference (Racine, WI, September 23-25, 1984).
INSTITUTION Ohio State Univ., Columbus. Mershon Center.
PUB DATE 84
NOTE 16p.; Conference convened by the Mershon Center (OSU) and Global Perspectives in Education, Inc. with support from the Danforth Foundation and the Johnson Foundation.
PUB TYPE Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021) -- Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Curriculum Development; Decision Making; Educational Improvement; *Educational Needs; *Global Approach; High Schools; *History Instruction; Intellectual Disciplines; Leadership Training; Social Studies; Teacher Education; Teacher Participation; World Affairs; *World History; World Problems
IDENTIFIERS *World Studies

ABSTRACT

Educators attending the 1984 Wingspread Conference discussed major challenges to improving world studies courses and identified strategies for addressing those challenges. The only opportunity the vast majority of American high school students have to obtain formal instruction about the world comes in a survey course of world history offered in the tenth grade. The survey course lacks an adequate conceptual base, attempts to cover too much content, and is difficult to teach. Practical steps that must be taken to strengthen world studies courses include (1) preparation of a handbook of alternative conceptualizations for world history courses, (2) collection of world studies course syllabi to be made available to teachers, (3) preparation of resources to facilitate the local development of global relations courses, (4) development of world studies teacher education courses and leadership programs for educators responsible for staff development in their school systems, and (5) involvement of teachers in evaluation and research relevant to school needs. In addition, the role of academic disciplines in public decision-making processes that set standards for social studies should be strengthened. (RM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Richard C. Remy
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ED256641

LB 1584.7 1985

SD 016 330

Conference Report

Strengthening High School World Studies Courses

A Wingspread Conference
September 23-25, 1984

Conference chairpersons:

Richard C. Remy
Robert B. Woyach
Mershon Center
The Ohio State University

Conference co-sponsors:

The American Association of School Administrators
The American Historical Association
The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
The Council of Chief State School Officers
The Council of State Social Studies Specialists
The International Studies Association
The National Association of Secondary School Principals
The National Council for the Social Studies
The Social Studies Supervisors Association
The World History Association

Strengthening High School World Studies Courses

Convened by the Mershon Center, The Ohio State University and Global Perspectives in Education, Inc., with support from The Danforth Foundation and The Johnson Foundation.

Contents

SUMMARY 1

WORLD STUDIES COURSES TODAY 2

CONFERENCE PURPOSE 2

MAJOR CHALLENGES 3

ACTIVITIES FOR STRENGTHENING WORLD STUDIES COURSES 3

- Handbook on Conceptualization 4
- A Collection of World Studies Syllabi 5
- Resources for Developing Global Relations Courses . . 6
- Enhancing Teacher Capabilities 7
- Measuring Course Effectiveness 9
- Involving the Academic Disciplines in Standard Setting 10

CONCLUSION 11

* * *

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS 12

CONVENING ORGANIZATIONS 13

CONFERENCE CO-DIRECTORS 14

Summary

The conference, "Strengthening the High School World Studies Course," brought together thirty-eight historians, political scientists, professional organization representatives, educational administrators, teacher educators, curriculum development specialists and teachers. Participants discussed major challenges to improving world studies courses and strategies for addressing those challenges.

Key findings from the conference include:

1. A high school world studies course offers one significant opportunity to equip students with the capacities needed to act competently as citizens given today's global realities.

2. At present there is disagreement over what should be the conceptual basis, subject-matter focus, and purposes of a world studies course.

3. The most prevalent approach in the schools, a survey of the history of Western and various non-Western civilizations, lacks an adequate conceptual base, attempts to cover too much content and is difficult to teach.

4. Alternative approaches being created in ad hoc fashion by teachers across the country display different but equally serious problems.

5. Three related but distinct challenges face those who wish to strengthen world studies courses. The challenges are:

   5.1 adequately conceptualizing the basic subject-matter and key objectives of different approaches to the course;

   5.2 making the best use of existing scholarship, institutional resources, instructional materials, and classroom practices; and

   5.3 enhancing the capacity of teachers to handle the subject matter, to develop their own courses and to choose knowledgeably among available alternatives.

6. Practical steps can be taken to meet such challenges. They include:

   6.1 development of a handbook outlining alternative conceptual approaches for high school world studies and their implications for content selection and course objectives;

   6.2 a collection of syllabi for teachers describing world studies courses being taught across the nation;

   6.3 preparation of a kit and sets of student materials to assist school systems working to create their own global relations courses;

   6.4 encouragement of core world studies courses at teacher preparation institutions and creation of regional leadership training programs for educators responsible for staff development relevant to world studies;

   6.5 encouragement of teacher-conducted research to assess the impact of particular types of courses and materials on student learning.

7. Serious consideration should also be given to strengthening the role of the academic disciplines in public decision-making processes which set standards for social studies, including world studies courses.

The conference organizers and co-sponsors do not advocate one approach to world studies as superior to all others. At the same time, conference participants recognized the fundamental role of history in any specific approach. Our goal is to stimulate use of the best examples of existing practice and the best scholarship to enhance the capacity of educators to take leadership in strengthening their own programs.

World Studies Courses Today

In our global age, the only opportunity the vast majority of American high school students have to obtain formal instruction about the world comes in a single social studies course typically offered at the tenth grade. There is considerable variety in the content and objectives of this world studies course as taught in school systems across the country. The most prevalent approach is the familiar survey of "world history." Other approaches to world studies are exemplified by courses in "world cultures," "world geography," "western civilization," "global issues" and "international relations."

In recent years increased attention has been focused on this vitally important curriculum opportunity. Recommendations of a number of national, state and local education task forces have called for re-emphasis of world studies. A growing number of states have begun to mandate new courses on "world history" or "world civilizations" as a required third unit of social studies in high school.

At the same time, many education leaders have begun to recognize that as presently taught such courses display very serious weaknesses. A new report on the status of history in the schools sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, for example, characterizes the world history survey course as follows:

> From many quarters comes the message that the course now is poorly taught, not received well by students, and is confined to the unimaginative exposition of far too much data. This is as much a problem of course design as of poor teaching... The course tries to cover too much ground...What the course needs is an adequate conceptual base.[1]

The problems of the high school world history course and variations on it, such as world civilizations, have encouraged some school systems and individual teachers to experiment with alternative courses and curricula. Some schools have, for example, attempted to revise the world history survey course by focusing it on themes or topics relevant to global history.

Other schools have taken a radically different approach by developing what might be called "global relations" courses. Such courses have tended to focus on persistent global issues such as population, food, energy, conflict and security, or on international relations and foreign policy. While these efforts can be highly creative, they display their own set of problems. They are often weakened by a lack of solid grounding in basic social science concepts and the historical background necessary to understand the workings of the contemporary international system. At worst such courses run the risk of being shallow treatments of current events focused on trendy headline topics.

Thus, there is currently real confusion and ambiguity regarding appropriate content and goals for a teachable high school world studies course. Debates rage, for example, over whether schools should return to a more integrated course focused on western civilization or should attempt to refine other approaches that have emerged. Teachers and curriculum policymakers find themselves caught between competing values, with little help in deciding the direction they should take or in identifying appropriate curriculum models for world studies at the tenth grade.

In response, the Mershon Center of The Ohio State University and Global Perspectives in Education, Inc. convened a national conference to consider key challenges facing the teaching of world studies in American high schools. Support for the conference was provided by the Danforth Foundation and the Johnson Foundation.

Ten major professional organizations joined in co-sponsoring the conference. Each co-sponsor recognizes the need to improve global education; each has a stake in strengthening the high school curriculum; each has resources to help schools improve the teaching of world studies.

Conference Purpose

The conference goal was to lay a conceptual and organizational foundation for future efforts to help local school systems strengthen their own world studies courses and curricula. The conference brought thirty-eight leading historians, political scientists, professional organization representatives, educational administrators, teacher educators, curriculum development specialists, and teachers together to:

1. identify and explore major challenges facing high school world studies courses today;
2. discuss possible strategies and opportunities for addressing such challenges; and
3. consider the role of scholars, colleges and universities, educational administrators and professional associations in helping schools strengthen their world studies course.

The conference agenda and discussions were not designed to promote one course of study or approach to world studies as superior to all others. Rather, the conference organizers,

co-sponsors and participants recognized from the outset the need for pluralism in approaches to world studies in high school. Ultimately in our democratic society schools must determine for themselves how to best teach students about the world and their place in it; outsiders cannot make such decisions for them.

Our concern in the conference discussions was to consider how we might help schools by bringing the best available examples of successful practice, and the most current scholarship regarding history and international studies to bear on such decisions. From the conference discussions we have derived a better understanding of the challenges schools face in strengthening their world studies courses, and we have identified several strategies for responding to those challenges.

Major Challenges

Three complex, interrelated challenges face those working to improve world studies instruction in our high schools. Each conference plenary session was devoted to exploring key features of one of these challenges. They are:

1. the challenge of adequately conceptualizing world studies courses,
2. the challenge of assessing and using existing materials and resources to facilitate change efforts, and
3. the challenge of enhancing the capacity of teachers and administrators through improved staff development and teacher preparation.

Each plenary session took as its starting point a set of propositions describing key dimensions of the challenge under consideration. While not definitive, these propositions do provide a useful conceptual map of both obstacles and opportunities for strengthening high school world studies courses. The propositions are:

Conceptualizing World Studies Courses

- There is disagreement over what should be the conceptual and the subject-matter focus of world studies courses (e.g., world history, world geography, global relations).
- There are no widely accepted sets of criteria by which to judge the appropriateness of alternative conceptual frameworks or to guide selection of subject-matter for such courses.
- By and large, existing conceptualizations fail to link the content and methods of these courses with a conception of the purposes of the course for students.
- Efforts by local school systems to revise or develop their own courses are hindered by lack of knowledge of the subject matter, lack of access to experts, and lack of curriculum development experience.
- Efforts by local school systems to revise or develop their own courses are hindered by lack of administrative support within the school district.

Assessing and Using Existing Resources

- There are no mechanisms for identifying existing, successful courses and using information about such courses to help other schools strengthen their own programs.
- Student textbooks do not present a global approach to world history nor does the pool of available textbooks present a range of alternative approaches to world studies courses from which educators may choose.
- Most college and university experts on subject-matter are unfamiliar with secondary education and are uninterested in the curriculum problems of local school systems.
- Standard survey-research strategies for assessing the impact of world studies courses have not provided the information educators need to assess model approaches and materials.

Staff Development and Teacher Preparation

- A large percentage of social studies teachers know little about world history or international studies and are ill-prepared to teach world studies courses.
- Local school systems do not have the capacity without outside assistance to provide adequate in-service training to redress the lack of teacher knowledge.
- Colleges and universities do not adequately prepare individuals to teach a world history or other world studies course.
- Individuals can be certified to teach world studies with little or no college coursework in world history or international studies.

Activities For Strengthening World Studies Courses

What can be done to help strengthen world studies courses? Conference plenary sessions identifying major challenges were followed by small group sessions in which participants discussed strategies for responding to these challenges. In the small working groups participants

weighed the pros and cons of various strategies and generated specific ideas on how such strategies might be implemented. These discussions provided the opportunity to evaluate potential strategies from the perspectives of the schools, the colleges and universities, and the national professional associations.

From these discussions we have identified five types of activities which could contribute in practical and effective ways to the capacity of local school systems to strengthen their world studies courses. This set of activities constitutes an agenda for the future.

Each type of activity could be a distinct contribution to improving world studies courses. At the same time, each could be strengthened by the ideas, materials, and experiences generated by complimentary activities. In short, if all or most of the activities could be carried out the resulting benefits for high school world studies could be more than simply the "sum" of the individual activities. The activities are:

1. Preparation of a handbook of alternative conceptualizations for world studies courses.

2. Collection for teachers of world studies course syllabi.

3. Preparation of resources to facilitate local development of global relations courses.

4. Development of world studies courses in teacher preparation institutions and of leadership programs for educators responsible for staff-development in their school systems.

5. Involvement of teachers in evaluation and research relevant to school needs.

In addition to the above, the conference identified a challenge which had not been part of the original agenda. This is the need to constructively involve the academic disciplines in setting standards for the social studies curriculum. This challenge faces those wishing to improve not only world studies courses but other important areas of the social studies as well. We consider this challenge and a possible response as a sixth item in this section.

Handbook On Conceptualization

Bringing the best available scholarship to bear on efforts to conceptualize alternative approaches to the world studies course and to develop well-integrated course frameworks is a key challenge facing educators today. As one conference participant summarized the challenge, "How can you teach world history if you don't know what it is?"

A handbook outlining and analyzing alternative conceptual approaches to the high school world studies course received wide endorsement in conference discussions. Such a handbook could help local curriculum design committees, textbook adoption committees, curriculum supervisors and local school boards make more systematic and informed decisions about the goals, organization and content of their high school world studies course. In addition, the process of developing the handbook would contribute immensely to our understanding of the role of a world studies course in the high school curriculum.

The Need for Conceptual Clarity. As an increasing number of states and school systems across the United States return to a traditional curriculum pattern requiring a year of world studies for graduation from high school, issues of conceptualization take on a new urgency. For no matter what conceptual approach a school system adopts, curriculum decision-makers face a confusing array of choices with respect to the selection and organization of course content.

If the course is to take an historical approach, should it focus on the historical roots of Western Civilization, or should it attempt a synthesis of global history? Is it more important for students to understand the European Middle Ages or to know about the rise of the Mongol Empire? Should African, Chinese or Latin American history be integrated into the course, and if so, how can this be done effectively?

If the course is organized in a non-chronological fashion, the issues can be even more confounding. Should the course focus on contemporary issues or enduring themes? If so, which issues and which themes are most basic? Should the course provide a survey of world geography or world cultures? If so, which areas and cultures are to be emphasized? Should the course give students an understanding of the structure and functions of global political, social and economic systems? If so, what are the basic concepts and knowledge base upon which the course should draw?

Less Can Be More. The importance of these choices can be seen in the current dilemma of the standard world history course.

Demands for the infusion of ever more content on historical civilizations and the non-Western world have so expanded the agenda of the typical world history course that it cannot be taught in a single year. Yet, courses of study and traditional conceptualizations of world history offer little guidance to help teachers who must select the most appropriate content and

then integrate that content into an effective course.

The new content has also increased the superficiality of the course. Precisely because there are no agreed upon criteria to guide the selection of content, teachers feel pressured to cover thousands of years of human history on six continents. So the treatment of each period and each culture tends to be superficial. As a result, students learn less than if the course were better integrated around a narrower set of goals and concepts. In this sense, more has meant less within the curriculum.

The Need for Synthesis. A number of conceptual approaches to the world studies course represent academically sound frameworks for organizing the subject-matter of world studies. At the same time, each approach accomplishes different goals and has different strengths and weaknesses.

Each conceptual approach replicates reality like a plasticine overlay in a biology text. One sheet diagrams the cardiovascular system, another the skeletal system, another the nervous system. Each sheet "explains" a good deal about one aspect of the human body. Each ignores a good deal more. Yet, if we were to look at the total biological reality of the human body at one time, the picture would be crammed, detailed and confusing.

World studies courses should not attempt to be all things to all people. Yet, there exists no adequate conceptualization of key goals and objectives for the various approaches to the course. Are there basic skills and knowledge which students should have if they are to become competent citizens? What concepts and subject matter are essential to each approach? Lacking synthesis regarding goals and objectives, it is virtually impossible to generate a limited and consistent set of criteria for selecting and integrating course content. The result is a course that appears crammed, detailed and confusing.

The discussions at Wingspread demonstrated the need for an effort to conceptualize alternative approaches to the world studies course and to make those conceptualizations available to curriculum decision-makers in useful ways.

Synthesis But Not Consensus. A handbook on contending approaches to the high school world studies course could outline and differentiate each of the major approaches to the course (e.g., Western Civilization, Global History, World Geography, World Cultures, Global Issues, World Relations). Each conceptual approach could be analyzed, with attention to both its pedagogical strengths and its potential pitfalls. Basic topical frameworks which faithfully implement the rationale of each approach could be outlined. Criteria for selecting specific content could be generated. Finally, sample syllabi and curriculum materials from school systems using each approach could demonstrate the practical state of the art.

The handbook would encourage synthesis within each of the alternative approaches. At the same time, the handbook would not assume the need for consensus with respect to any one approach as superior to all others.

The values, needs and capabilities of a particular school system and student body have as much to say about the "proper" direction of the world studies course as its various academic foundations. Thus the purpose of a handbook on conceptualization should be to provide decision-makers with an outline and rigorous analysis of the alternatives available to them. It should provide a baseline from which to begin discussions about the best approach for local needs. Once a preferred approach is identified, the conceptualization, criteria and model syllabi for that approach provide a starting point for local curriculum and staff development efforts.

A Collection Of World Studies Syllabi

Efforts to strengthen world studies courses can be greatly enhanced by information about existing courses and practices.

Conference participants expressed nearly unanimous endorsement of the idea of collecting and making readily available syllabi or other appropriate descriptions of world studies courses being taught in high schools across the nation. A collection might be organized in terms of general categories representing various widely used approaches to the course such as world history, world cultures, western civilization, global relations, and the like. Ideally, a syllabi collection could be maintained by a national association such as the National Council for the Social Studies in a manner easily accessible to teachers.

Potential Uses. A collection of syllabi could be profitably used by teachers and curriculum administrators in several ways. First, it could help with short-term curriculum planning in those school districts facing a mandate to quickly implement a newly required world studies course. Second, collected syllabi could allow teachers to compare what they teach with the practices of their peers across the country. Such comparisons are one key component of any effort at self-assessment and self-improvement. Third, a collection of syllabi could facilitate local curriculum development by giving people ideas and helping them locate what they want to do in the larger spectrum of possibilities. Fourth, collected syllabi might be used in a variety of ways to strengthen pre-service teacher education

courses. Finally, such a collection might help textbook publishers, professional associations, teacher educators, curriculum developers and others identify opportunities for improvement by providing one indicator of the state of high school world studies instruction.

Selecting Syllabi. Conference participants considered necessary steps for identifying, nominating and selecting syllabi. There was lively discussion as to whether a syllabi collection should include only demonstrably "excellent" or "exemplary" or "successful" courses.

Some participants pointed out that to set such a goal would require the establishment of costly, complex procedures for on-site evaluations of the actual courses portrayed by syllabi. The costs associated with conducting such evaluations nationwide could far outweigh any benefits defined in terms of responding to the needs of teachers and school systems. Others argued that standards of some type could and should be used in screening and selecting syllabi. All agreed the key need is to give teachers a chance to examine a very wide array of syllabi and let them reach their own conclusions about possible uses in their own situations.

Building a Collection. Syllabi should be very widely solicited in order to insure a representation of different approaches from different types of school systems. Organizations such as the Council of State Socia Studies Specialists, the Social Studies Supervisors Association, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals could play important roles in collecting syllabi. Further, some elemental screening for readability and completeness is likely to be necessary as well as categorization of syllabi in terms of basic approaches. Eventually, a collection might be developed so that additional categorization could be undertaken in terms of variables relevant to teachers such as one or two semester courses, courses that do not use a textbook and the like.

Resources For Developing Global Relations Courses

Special resources are needed to help schools that wish to develop or improve existing global relations courses. Such courses are frequently offered as electives in the high school social studies sequence. In other cases they serve as an alternative to the more familiar world history or western civilization course. Across the nation, they form an increasingly important component in the total pattern of high school world studies course offerings.

Nearly all these global relations courses have been developed by teachers in their local school districts. Major commercial textbook publishers have not prepared student textbooks on global relations for use by high school students. Rather, these courses have usually emerged because of the persistence of one or more teachers within a particular school. They typically come from years of ad hoc curriculum accumulations as opposed to highly articulated and formal curriculum change efforts.

Precisely because they are the creations of individuals for their own use, these efforts receive little attention. Most probably, they also have limited transferability since they represent the accumulated resources, learning and perspectives of the individuals amassing them. In nearly every instance the development of these courses has been greatly hindered by an obstacle which received attention in conference discussions and which can be extremely difficult to overcome. This is the lack of a readily accessible knowledge base upon which teachers can draw when creating new courses in a complex subject-area such as world studies.

A Knowledge Base. Truly innovative courses place tremendous demands on the teachers who are asked or wish to develop and teach them. Because the subject matter is new, teachers rarely have the substantive knowledge at the onset to organize and assess content materials without help. Yet the typical school system does not provide teachers with the necessary training, resource materials or expert help to cope with the new subject-matter. And university-based scholars, even if they are available, often lack insight into the most appropriate curriculum objectives and strategies for secondary school learners. In addition, such experts are often unaware of and/or uninterested in the curriculum problems of local school systems.

Thus many local curriculum improvement efforts start with a tabula rasa and quickly flounder either because they aggregate the inabilities rather than the skills of participants, or because they quickly reach the limits of participants' knowledge. As a result, newly developed courses may have problems equivalent to, albeit different than, those of the discarded, traditional course.

Further, most teachers are not skilled in the process of curriculum writing, nor do their school districts give them sufficient time to work seriously at the process. As a result, new courses can become patchworks of readings on current topics rather than a carefully integrated body of subject-matter. Thus, a real opportunity is missed to systematically expose students to global realities and concepts in a manner designed to help them pull together bits and pieces of their already emerging global perspective.

How can we help teachers do the very best job possible of developing their own global

relations courses? The handbook and syllabi collection described earlier could make a contribution, although neither activity is focused solely on global relations types of courses.

Two activities which could directly facilitate local development of such courses are: (1) preparation of a curriculum development resource kit and (2) creation of a set of model student materials around which a range of global relations courses could be organized by experienced teachers.

A Resource Kit. In a working group conference participants outlined specifications for a kit that could help teachers, curriculum supervisors and others working to develop or refine their own global relations course. Such a kit could provide assistance with course content through annotated bibliographies of source material, detailed descriptions of exemplary courses, syllabi from relevant college level courses and the like. It could also include practical suggestions on curriculum planning and writing such as material on the preparation of objectives, the assessment of student abilities and the uses of instructional technology relevant to global relations subject matter. Finally, a resource kit could contain suggestions on the context of course development. These could include strategies for installing the course within the school, ideas for gaining community support and strategies for using the community as a content resource for teaching the course.

Student Materials. A major National Science Foundation study confirms what knowledgeable observers of the schools already know. Teachers rely on a single student textbook as the central instrument of their classroom instruction and as a key source of knowledge. Further, in most schools textbooks are the basis of curriculum planning, course organization and day-to-day lesson planning. Approximately 80% of all curriculum decisions in the nation's schools are made on the basis of a textbook.[2]

Good teachers, of course, can and do supplement the texts with a wide array of other materials and teaching strategies. Nevertheless the textbook gives teachers a core of factual information for students around which to build a course. A good textbook is a starting point.

Teachers working to create global relations courses have no such student materials to help them. In addition, others who might be interested in teaching such a course are deterred because they have no complete set of student materials to examine. Hence they never have the opportunity to see what a course might look like and how it compares with existing courses.

At present a type of "Catch 22" situation exists. Since no government agency or private foundation supports the development of new student materials, commercial publishers have become the sole source of textbooks for world studies courses. But commercial publishers are reluctant to prepare global relations textbooks because they claim there is little demand for such material or the demand is unknown. The lack of demand, however, may in part be due to the fact that teachers never get to see what such a course would look like.

There is a real need for sets of student materials which could give teachers, curriculum committees, school board members, parents, and students an opportunity to see a model high school global relations course. Such materials should be prepared by experienced curriculum developers working closely from start to finish with teachers, students, international relations scholars and historians. They should be designed to fit the needs of average teachers and students. They should not be endorsed by any professional association as representing an "official" or correct approach to the subject-matter. Rather, their goal should be to provide a credible approach to global relations suitable for high school students which can compete in the marketplace of curriculum ideas along with other approaches to world studies.

Enhancing Teacher Capabilities

In his analysis of the contemporary media, Marshall McLuhan observed that in many respects the medium of communication had become the message. The critical role of the "medium" in shaping the message is equally true in education. But more than any set of materials or technological aides, the teacher is the medium of instruction.

The need to strengthen pre-service programs and in-service opportunities for world studies teachers was a clear priority for many of the participants at the Wingspread conference. At the same time, conference participants demonstrated a keen appreciation of the complexity of the challenge and in some cases a skeptical attitude toward potential responses to it.

In conference discussions several specific strategies for enhancing teacher capabilities were suggested. While no consensus emerged around any one strategy as the critical response to the challenge, each one can be seen as a limited step in the right direction.

Pre-Service Education. Given the high projected turnover in teaching staffs within the next two decades, conference participants clearly agreed that enhancing the quality of pre-service education in world studies was an important dimension of any effort to strengthen world studies courses. At the same time, radical changes in the pre-service curriculum of larger

institutions was considered both unlikely and unnecessary by many participants.

Yet some practical steps to strengthen the preparation of secondary world studies teachers were suggested. Among these was an increase in the number of credit hours in disciplines related to world studies required of future teachers. Most pre-service programs do require students to take up to eighty percent of their coursework in academic subjects. Yet, the actual credit hours required for teaching certification in any one area is often only half that demanded of academic majors in the same area.

Changes in credit hour requirements may be a two-edged sword, however. Certification standards in part reflect the need of teachers to have multiple certifications. World studies teachers who can also teach American government, math or English give administrators more flexibility in making teaching assignments. Multiple certifications have also meant greater job security for teachers in an era of staff reductions. Thus, increasing credit hour requirements in world studies may make the better prepared world studies teacher less hirable. While increasing demand for new teachers in coming decades may provide an opportunity for increased specialization, shortages of teachers have historically been accompanied by a lowering not a raising of standards.

Conference participants also generally endorsed a second suggestion for strengthening pre-service education: that academic departments be encouraged to offer "core courses" in world studies. Most colleges and universities, for example, do not offer a world history survey course. As a result, the majority of high school teachers expected to teach world history will not have been exposed to any attempt to synthesize the human experience--except possibly as high school students! In cases in which academic departments resist such additions to their curriculum, colleges and schools of education may themselves have to take on the burden of developing and offering such courses.

In-Service Staff Development. Changes in pre-service programs can help lay a better foundation for world studies teachers. But given the changing nature of knowledge in world studies, there can be no escaping the need for effective and continuing in-service staff development programs.

Conference participants were explicitly asked to discuss the role which university-based, regional training centers could play in enhancing the capabilities of current world studies teachers. Their responses helped identify limitations in this concept as well as important opportunities.

Assessments of the NDEA summer clinics of the 1960's indicate some of the pitfalls of regional training programs. Such programs often have little impact beyond the individual teacher-participants. Indeed, their impact on the subsequent teaching behavior of the participants themselves is not well documented.

The specific pitfalls of the standard summer clinic are many. Often what is learned in the clinic may have only limited relevance to the existing curriculum. In the clinic teachers may receive little help in making the transition from clinic instruction to classroom instruction. Once back home experts may be unavailable to reinforce what has been learned. There may be little or no support from administrators, colleagues or experts to help teachers cope with the problems which emerge as they begin to use new material.

Regional training programs can, however, provide a key staff development resource for school districts with limited access to experts on curriculum design or world affairs. In such instances, regional programs can be most effective if they focus on particular instructional programs or materials. Teachers can be introduced to classroom materials and receive relevant background briefings from substantive experts. Such clinics can overcome some of the superficiality of the typical in-service program. More time is available and access to experts greater. Teachers can concentrate on the task undistracted by the everyday school environment. Thus relatively greater substantive depth is possible.

Leadership Development. Regional training programs can also play a key role in efforts to introduce system-wide changes in world studies courses. If system-wide course improvement and staff development is the goal, however, the focus of the regional training effort must shift. Rather than attempting to provide staff development for individual teachers, regional programs must concentrate on leadership development for those curriculum decision-makers responsible for organizing and implementing staff development programs.

One strategy for leadership training programs would be to help local staff developers upgrade their skills and knowledge base. Curriculum supervisors, key administrators and master teachers might attend workshops on staff development skills. Other sessions might focus on alternative designs for successful staff development programs. Finally, briefings by content experts in world studies could assist in identifying key substantive issues and concerns for world studies courses.

A second strategy for leadership training programs would be to assist curriculum commit-

tees initiate efforts to improve or create new courses of study. Such committees, typically composed of local teachers and administrators, could be briefed on alternative approaches to the world studies course, the strengths and weaknesses of the various approaches, and key resources available for each. Through guided decision-making processes, teams could decide which direction their world studies course should take. Assistance could be given in identifying and assessing strategies for mobilizing resources, including local content experts. The teams could also begin to outline a course of study and specific strategies for curriculum development and change within their district.

Commitment and Follow-Up. Whether regional programs focus on individual change or system-wide change, their effectiveness depends to a large extent on a few key conditions. Regional training programs must be highly coordinated with cooperating school systems. The regional program must serve an identified need of local teachers or the local curriculum. Participation in a regional program should also be premised on clear commitments on the part of both cooperating school systems and the regional center. School systems must make conscious commitments to invest resources in subsequent staff development and course improvement efforts. The regional center must commit itself to following-up on training programs in various ways during coming years. Sustained follow-through by regionally based training programs is one of the key conditions for success.

Measuring Course Effectiveness

If we are to strengthen world studies courses in our nation's high schools, it is essential that we learn more about the impact of particular types of courses and model materials on student learning. This will require a new kind of commitment to evaluation and assessment research. Emphasis should be placed on conducting school-based research designed to serve the specific needs of school systems and teachers rather than simply the interests of university scholars.

Two practical strategies for promoting and facilitating school-based evaluation research surfaced in conference discussions. First, efforts can be made to utilize existing research instruments more widely, thus reducing the cost of evaluation research for local school systems. Second, efforts can be undertaken to mobilize networks of world studies teachers to conduct evaluation research in cooperation with university researchers.

Uncertain Models. At present there exists relatively little research basis for choosing particular approaches to the high school world studies course or for selecting certain materials over others.

Considerable research has been done to measure the impact of particular programs and to measure students' knowledge and attitudes with respect to various dimensions of world studies. However, the utility of available research is compromised by the specialized goals of most evaluation research. For example, research suggests that students who have taken international relations courses are more aware of key global issues than those who have taken more traditional world history or world cultures courses.[3] But in comparing these approaches, decision-makers also need to know how well they prepare students to analyze or interpret world events or to appreciate how the past shapes the present and the future. Available research does not compare the various approaches on these and other important dimensions.

Our limited knowledge about the impact of different approaches and course materials creates a dilemma for practitioners. Teachers and administrators can avoid some of the problems of local curriculum development by using the syllabi and materials from "model" courses as a starting point for their course improvement efforts. Typically, courses are defined as "model" primarily because of their use of innovative supplementary materials or their inclusion of certain content. However, little may be known about the impact of the "model" course on students' attitudes, skills and knowledge. Thus the "model" course provides an uncertain baseline for curriculum improvement.

Existing Resources for School-Based Research. One implication is that research targeted at the needs of specific curriculum decision-makers will be necessary in the future. This will only be feasible if schools become involved in designing and conducting their own research. This may require generating new resources for research as well as making better use of existing resources. One important existing resource includes questionnaire items that have been developed and used in the past.

Despite the limits to our cumulative knowledge, survey research efforts over the years have resulted in a wealth of tested evaluation items. These survey items can be accessed and used by school-based research efforts to suit their own assessment purposes. Questionnaire items exist which measure students' knowledge of global issues and key historical events, their attitudes toward other cultures and their perceptions of their ability to influence world affairs. Many of the items have been elaborately pre-tested and validated. While it is critically important that such items be carefully selected to match the objectives of the program being evaluated, their use represents a short-cut for many school-based evaluation efforts with limited resources to devote to research design.

The accessibility of these research tools has increased through the development of the Global Education Network for Evaluation.[4] Through the network, schools can access survey items and other evaluation techniques. Consultants associated with the network can assist school-based researchers in assembling a research instrument suited directly to the needs of local administrators and teachers.

Teachers and Evaluators. Learning more about the impact of particular approaches and sets of materials will also require going beyond survey techniques. More sophisticated understanding of what students learn in world studies courses and of the interaction between course and environment will require greater use of observational and interview methods.

If multi-method research is to become the norm, however, it will require that the most important resource for educational research be more fully tapped: the classroom teacher. With advice or training from researchers, classroom teachers can administer pre-and post-tests and conduct in-depth interviews. The results can be incorporated into teacher and student logs which in turn can provide tremendous insight into what is or is not working in specific courses.

Emphasis on teacher-conducted research can also contribute directly to course improvement. As teachers develop research agendas and specific research instruments, they rethink course goals and objectives. As they conduct their research, they become more self-conscious about their instruction as well as about the impact of specific learning materials. If they have a stake in the research process, it is more likely that research findings will be internalized and used to direct future course improvement efforts.

Involving The Academic Disciplines In Standard Setting

Conference discussions led to the identification of a fourth challenge for educators concerned about the quality not only of world studies courses but of social studies education in general. This is the challenge of involving the academic disciplines in the collective decision-making processes which set standards and requirements for social studies education today.

Standards affecting social studies requirements, course content and teacher preparation/certification are set through a variety of formal and informal mechanisms. These include minimum standards or related mandates provided by state legislatures or boards of education, curriculum guidelines set by state departments of education, statewide textbook adoption procedures in 21 states, as well as the reports and recommendations of various commissions, boards and special panels. In our democratic, pluralistic education system, a wide variety of interest groups often participate, either formally or informally, in such standard setting procedures.

The role and impact of interest groups on setting educational policy for social studies was explored to a limited extent in a conference plenary session on "Roles For Educational Organizations in Building Excellence." Discussions continued both informally and in a small working group made up of professional association representatives. What emerged was recognition that the knowledge-producing segments of society have become isolated from the collective decision-making processes which shape the curriculum and the requirements for teacher preparation.

In short, while individual scholars sometimes take part in an ad hoc way in such activities, the social sciences and history are not systematically and forthrightly represented in these processes. Scholars producing knowledge from which the core of the social studies curriculum is ultimately derived have become isolated from the often quasi-legislative decisions which determine the eventual uses of that knowledge in the educational system.

A Complex Challenge. Can workable strategies be derived to involve scholars in standard setting processes? No simple answer to this question is readily apparent.

This challenge embodies some complex issues regarding the social uses of knowledge. For example, there is need for recognition of the unavoidable dilemmas of fit between the knowledge generated by researchers and the knowledge needed by social studies educators. Knowledge produced by disciplinary specialization does not necessarily correlate simply and directly with the general education requirements of elementary and secondary schools. Such factors will eventually condition any effort to systematically involve the academic disciplines in standard setting.

At another level, the challenge involves the political and logistical problems of mobilizing and synchronizing the efforts of large numbers of busy scholars across the United States. It probably also involves inevitable complications associated with cooperation among professional academic associations. While not insurmountable, these practical concerns should not be dismissed lightly.

The Professional Associations. Several conference participants suggested that the professional associations could and should play a key role in mobilizing greater academic input into standard setting processes. With regards to the world studies course, for example, such groups as the World History Association, the American

Historical Association and the International Studies Association represent scholars across the country who have both a stake in the quality of such courses and a contribution to make to setting standards for them.

Next Steps. As a representative of social studies educators across the country, the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) has a clear stake in standards setting. The possibility of convening NCSS and the key scholarly associations to explore their mutual interests in standard setting for social studies should be seriously considered. Such an assembly might tackle questions like the following:

- What real opportunities exist for the input of "academic knowledge" into the standard setting process?
- How might the academic disciplines participate constructively in the politics of standard setting?
- How could NCSS best exercise a leadership role in coordinating such participation?
- What would the financial and other costs of starting and maintaining such an effort be?

One cannot predict the outcome of addressing such questions. However, serious attention to these issues could at least insure that a potential strategy for strengthening social studies instruction would not be overlooked.

Conclusion

In the late 1960's and early 1970's school systems across the United States began adopting new curriculum requirements which gave students greater freedom in deciding what courses they would or would not take in high school. In most cases these changes meant an elimination of the traditional world history requirement--and a decline in student enrollment in world studies courses generally. In many cases, the on-going process of course improvement and renewal through which schools typically update and revitalize their curriculum was disrupted for world studies. Over time, school systems suffered a radical decline in their ability to offer effective world studies courses to all their students.

It is within this context that the new demands for requiring world studies must be implemented. On the one hand, the picture is grim. Many school systems lack the staff to teach effective world studies courses to all their students. In many districts there is limited consensus about the approach which a world studies course should take. In most districts there is a keen understanding of the limits and problems of the traditional world history survey course.

But the picture is also one of opportunity. In many school systems across the country there exists a real interest in revitalizing their high school world studies courses. There is a willingness to experiment with new approaches. There is an equally evident demand that any approach provide an academically sound capstone to the development of international understanding on the part of students.

Thus while the need to help the schools strengthen their world studies courses is great, the opportunity for effective course improvement efforts is equally great. Conference participants left Wingspread with a much better understanding both of the challenges that need to be faced and of some possible responses to those challenges. They also left with a conviction that the time to respond to the challenge is now.

Footnotes

[1] Douglas D. Alder and Matthew T. Downey, "Problem Areas in the History Curriculum," in History In the Schools, ed. Matthew T. Downey (Washington, D.C.: National Council for the Social Studies, forthcoming).

[2] Karen B. Wiley, The Status of Pre-College Science, Mathematics and Social Science Education: 1955-1975, Vol. 3 (Boulder, Colo.: Social Science Education Consortium, 1977), pp. 80-81.

[3] Judith Torney-Purta, "Predictors of Global Awareness and Global Concern Among Secondary School Students," paper presented at the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, 1984.

[4] For information about the network contact: Dr. Judith Torney-Purta, Department of Human Development, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742.

List Of Participants

Lee Anderson
Chairperson
Department of Political Science
Northwestern University

Jeffrey Blaga
Director of Social Studies
Division of Instructional Services
Racine Unified School District

Donald Bragaw
Chief, Bureau of Social Studies Education
New York State Department of Education
President-Elect, National Council for the Social Studies

Harry Chernotsky
Professor of Political Science
University of North Carolina at Charlotte

H. Thomas Collins
Global Education Outreach
Washington, D.C.

David Devlin-Foltz
Program Officer
Carnegie Corporation

Jeremiah Floyd
Associate Executive Director
National School Boards Associaton

Barbara Flynn
Editorial Vice President, Social Studies
Scott, Foresman and Company

Charlotte Frank
Executive Director
Division of Curriculum and Instruction
New York City Board of Education

Dorothy B. Goodman
Director, Trustee
Washington International School
Washington, D.C.

Frances Haley
Executive Director
National Council for the Social Studies

Hazel Hertzberg
Professor of History and Education
Teachers College
Columbia University

Marilynn Hitchens
Wheat Ridge High School
Jefferson County, Colorado Schools
World History Association

Francis Hunkins
Professor of Education
University of Washington
Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development

Elsie Jones
Associate Executive Director
American Association of School Administrators

Judy Kirman
Assistant Principal
Shaw High School
East Cleveland City Schools

Steven D. Lavine
Assistant Director
Arts & Humanities
Rockefeller Foundation

Rita Matiku
Wingspread Fellow
Alverno College
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Patrick McGowan
Chairperson
Department of Political Science
Arizona State University

Howard Mehlinger
Dean, College of Education
Indiana University

Louis J. Nicolosi
Louisiana Department of Public Instruction
President, Council of State Social Studies Specialists

William Parrish
Assistant Director of Research
National Association for Secondary School Principals

John Patrick
Professor of Education
Indiana University

Sophia Peterson
Professor of Political Science
University of West Virginia

Richard C. Remy
Director, Citizenship Development Program
Mershon Center

Kevin Reilly
Professor of History
Somerset County College
Vice President,
World History Association

Helen Richardson
Fulton County Georgia School System
President, Social Studies
Supervisors Association

Terri B. Rosenblatt
Director, International Education
Council of Chief State School Officers

Arthur Rumpf
Curriculum Specialist
Social Studies
Milwaukee Public Schools

Arnold Schrier
Professor of History
University of Cincinnati

Charles A. Thompson
Coordinator, Social Studies Education
Wichita Public Schools

Donald R. Thompson
President
Wisconsin Institue for
International Education
Racine, Wisconsin

Judith Torney-Purta
Professor of Human Development
University of Maryland

William Welsh
Professor of Political Science
Arizona State University
Executive Director-Elect,
International Studies Association

Angene Wilson
Associate Professor,
Curriculum & Instruction
University of Kentucky

Pamela Wilson
Director of Program
Global Perspectives in Education

Robert B. Woyach
Associate Director,
Citizenship Development Program
Mershon Center

Jamil S. Zainaldin
Deputy Executive Director
American Historical Association

Convening Organizations

Global Perspectives in Education, Inc. is a nonpartisan citizens' effort building on American democratic traditions to help prepare our youth for the challenges of national citizenship in a global age. It provides services to schools, school districts, educational agencies, and to all concerned with global perspectives education in the elementary and secondary schools and in the community. It works with educators and educational agencies at all levels, with national, state, and community organizations, and with media, business, labor and other interest groups, to enhance global perspectives education in informal as well as formal school settings. For more information contact Andrew F. Smith, GPE, Inc., 218 East 18th Street, New York, NY 10003, (212) 475-0850

The Mershon Center is a social science organization at The Ohio State University. The Center brings University resources to bear on problems in national security and public policy. The "Citizenship Development and Global Education Program" is one of five major programs at Mershon. University faculty, teachers, administrators, and others affiliated with the "Citizenship Development and Global Education Program" are concerned with enhancing the capacity of individuals to act competently as citizens in a global age. Program members analyze policy issues, design educational activities, develop instructional materials, and conduct staff development for schools, colleges, universities, community groups and government agencies. For more information contact Richard C. Remy, Mershon Center, 199 West Tenth Avenue, Columbus, OH 43201, (614) 422-1681.

Conference Co-Directors

Richard C. Remy is Director of the Citizenship Development and Global Education Program at the Mershon Center, The Ohio State University, where he also holds appointments in the Department of Political Science and the College of Education. Dr. Remy has taught in the Chicago Public schools and served as a consultant to numerous school systems, state departments of education, government agencies and development centers. He has written extensively on citizenship, international learning and decision-making and is the co-author of several social studies textbooks.

Robert B. Woyach is a political scientist and Associate Director of the Mershon Center's Citizenship Development and Global Education Program. Dr. Woyach has developed and written seven volumes of supplementary materials for elementary and secondary teachers. These include lessons for bringing a global perspective to the high school world history course. He has written several articles and papers on the use of local resources in global education and on the meaning of citizenship in a complex, interdependent world.